HARAMBEE FLAME!

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In This AFRICAN HISTORY Edition:

BACK IN TIME(Expanded): Friendships And Alliances Between Indigenous People And Africans; FROM OTHER SOURCES: Africentric Prep School Fights Shutdown, Former Panthers Speak Up For Geronimo, New Information On Inkatha, etc.; POETRY: Halloween On The Streets; BOOKS & PERIODICALS;...

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural exchange is germane to human growth.

BACK IN TIME

In this month of February, we will read and hear about any number of "black" supposed heroes--from Crispus Attucks to Colin Powell. Many of these "heroes" will have one fundamental thing in common. Their hero status has been based upon their having fought and/or died on behalf of Europeans here in the United States of Occupied America. No doubt, the Buffalo Soldiers will be high on the list of African historical figures whom we'll be expected to pay some homage to. In this African History edition of the HARAMBEE FLAME, we will tell a different tale, that of the many African people in this country who had the good sense to understand that the indigenous people of this land were not their enemy and the moral strength to join with them in common struggle against slavery, theft, murder, and other crimes perpetrated against them by the self-proclaimed European "masters."

Using excerpts from THERE IS A RIVER by Vincent Harding and BLACK INDIANS: A HIDDEN HERITAGE by William Loren Katz, we will tell a story which is generally kept under wraps. We tell this story because, as the U.S. military adventures against Grenada, Libya, Panama, and Iraq so clearly illustrate, many African people in this country do have the sense to understand that the U.S. declaration that someone(s) is its enemy does not make that someone(s) their enemy and/or do not have the moral strength to refuse to fight other Africans or other people of color on behalf of Uncle Sam.

As early as 1657 Africans and Indians in Hartford "joined in an uprising and destroyed some buildings" in the settlement.

In New York early in 1712--a few years after the warning from Lord Cornbury--"some Negro slaves of the Cormantine and Pawpaw nations, together with a few Indians...on March 25 formed a plot

"to destroy all the whites in the town." On April 6, when the plans were put into motion...they set fire to an outhouse and waited for the white inhabitants of the area to respond to the alarm, being "prepared to slay each person who came to put out the blaze." Their resolve, their weapons, and the element of surprise made it possible for the conspirators to kill nine persons and wound seven others before soldiers were ordered out. Then the insurrectionists retreated and scattered into the night. The next day the colonial troops were joined by the local militia. In the course of the ensuing battles, some black rebels committed suicide rather than submit to capture...

In the decades between the American Revolution and the Civil War Black Indian societies were reported in New Jersey, New York, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Connecticut, Tennessee, and Massachusetts. Some managed to live as maroons, distant from a white society they rejected...

Jess (right) shown with Victorio's Apaches.

Around the time African settlers arrived in Florida, refugees from the Creek Nation also settled there. This group called themselves "Seminoles" or runaways, and their Muskogee culture accepted a variety of Indian ethnic groups...For Seminole people used to admitting those who were different, it was easy to accept Africans.

Africans proved far more familiar with Florida's tropical terrain than Spaniards or Seminoles. They transplanted a rice cultivation method practiced in Senegambia and Sierra Leone. Used to a more moderate climate, Seminoles began to learn how to survive in Florida from these ex-slaves...

The Seminole Nation offered their new friends some valuable gifts in return. Africans and other ethnic groups enjoyed an independent village status...

Library of Congress

Negro Abraham,
an interpreter and comrade of the Seminole Indians
in their fight for self-determination
against U.S. military forces.

So many slaves fled to the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy that, in 1726, a governor of New York made the leading chiefs promise to return all fugitives to their villages. They gave their word. In 1764 Hurons also promised. The next year Delawares promised. None ever returned a single slave.

In 1750 Captain Tobias Fitch sent off a posse of five to retrieve a slave living in the Creek Nation. A Creek chief stood between them and the black man, cut their rope and threw it in the fire. Then he warned them his villagers had as many guns as they did. The posse returned empty-handed...

In the year of the Compromise(1850) it was... reported that some 1500 former black slaves were fighting in Texas alongside the Comanche Indians, resisting the encroachments of the white settlers and armies upon their lands and liberties.

.....

In addition to the above, FAMOUS INDIAN CHIEFS I'VE KNOWN by O. Howard informs of at least four Africans who became chiefs of native nations("tribes"): Mickenopah, Petopeekis, Tawaquena, and Osceola. One factor which contributed greatly to the ease with which Africans and indigenous people were able to establish and maintain ties of friendship was the similarity between their values and outlooks. The indigenous people and Africans were generally communalistic, felt kinship with the natural world (including its creatures), saw the various aspects of living and existence as parts of an integrated whole, and otherwise were of like mind.

But while there were these many alliances, many instances of individual and group friendship, and much inter-marriage; there were, on the other hand, hostilities(often instigated by

(Cont. on p. 16)

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(parent chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, Inc.), is a pan-Africanist newsletter. The FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people, events and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any distinctions between African people based solely on place of birth. References in the FLAME to Africans are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publications, in which cases we do not alter "black" or other terms designating African people. This is our practice because we do not wish to diminish the integrity and authenticity of the articles we excerpt from.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa(p.k.a. D. Rice).

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 1200 words, though longer pieces will not be automatically rejected. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics. We are looking for poems which address African folks' lives, the conditions we face, and our struggles to rise above those things which hinder us. Submitted poems should not sacrifice power and beauty for the sake of uniform rhythm and/or rhyme. Send submissions to the editor c/o HARAMBEE FLAME; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE; 68542-2500.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Africentric Prep School Fights Shutdown

"'It's another prep school about to close', says Clare Damio, director of Freedom Prep, a school for 16 to 25-year-old male dropouts that is on the verge of closing...

"'The board of directors want to dissolve the school, although the Freedom Prep advisory board is willing to take on the responsibility of the school', says Ms. Damio...

"Ms. Damio says the staff has gone to court in an effort to take over the school, but the board is determined to see the school closed...

"The board's decision...resulted after Dr. Leonard Jeffries visited the school following his controversial speech in Albany.

"According to Ms. Damio, one of the board members told her over lunch never to invite Dr. Jeffries.

..."Dr. Jeffries had already visited the school, and the staff was seeking Al Sharpton next.

"Ms. Damio says the board...fired the staff and sent notices to the parents that the school was closed...

"Ms. Damio says when the students heard what happened, they refused to close the school.

"'They raised money to help keep the school open', says Ms. Damio.

"Freedom Prep School is an alternative Afrocentric school started eight years ago by Frederick Douglass Kirkpatric, a prominent civil rights leader and Ms. Damio's husband...

"Over 300 young people have passed through its

doors in two and a half years, and 70 more are on its waiting list...

-from "Did Visits Of Sharpton, Jeffries Prompt Board To Close School," page 33, Jan. 25 NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS

Former Panthers Finally Speak Up For Geronimo

"Five former leaders of the Black Panther Party broke a 21-year silence Jan. 2 to demand a new trial for former party member Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt)...

"Ji Jaga, who was expelled from the party in 1971, has been in prison since 1972, when he was convicted for a 1968 murder-robbery in Santa Monica. Party members refused to testify at his trial.

"Hilliard(David) was joined by Kathleen Cleaver, Emory Douglas, John Seale and Harvey McClendon. They stated unequivocally that ji Jaga had been with them at a meeting of the party's central committee in Oakland, 400 miles away from Santa Monica, on the day of the murder. Former party chair Bobby Seale sent a written statement that he was also at that meeting and joined in the demand for a new trial.

"Cleaver, who had also been expelled from the party, returned from exile in Algeria during ji Jaga's trial and testified for the defense. She said that the long silence was due to 'a split in the party, with some party members banned from speaking to each other. The whole organization was divided'.

"FBI infiltrators in the party--part of the bureau's COINTELPRO plan to disrupt the Black liberation movement--abetted the hostilities, which led to several deaths and numerous expulsions..."

-from "Panthers Break Silence, Urge Freeing Of Geronimo," page 3, Jan. 29 THE GUARDIAN(N.Y.)

U.S. Maneuvering In Haitian Political Crisis

..."Haitian apprehensions about Washington's role (in negotiations concerning possible return of Aristide to Haiti and the presidency) have been reinforced by a document reportedly leaked from the U.S. Embassy in October. The Haitian security guard allegedly responsible for obtaining the document, Isaac Remilien, was killed in his home by soldiers shortly after the leak became known. The U.S. Embassy did not protest the murder.

"The document outlines a strategy for dealing with the coup: 'The United States would agree to recognize a new prime minister and unblock the Haitian government assets in the United States, as well as recognize the new prime minister's power to fire Aristide's ambassadors and replace them.

"'If Aristide comes back', the paper continues, 'it could not be earlier than a few months from now...and onlu so that he can be sent back, destitute, into exile shortly thereafter...The prime minister will become the real power in the government. We have to give the prime minister economic support necessary for him to ensure his position. Nobody from the Lavalas movement should be part of the new government...

"'What is needed presently', the document concludes, 'is a broad, sustained and very discreet approach from the U.S. policy-makers and the media which will counteract and nullify the propaganda of the Lavalas organization'.

"The U.S. State Department has termed the document a 'hilarious fabrication', but the Washington Office on Haiti, a human rights monitoring group, says it has investigated the issue and believes the work is 'authentic'. The group is distributing the document, with its own Jan. 3 observation that 'several key pieces of the strategy did occur in recent weeks'..."

-from "U.S. Ploy: Aristide Can Return--As Fig-

urehead," page 12, Jan. 22 THE GUARDIAN

New Disclosures On Inkatha/So. African Gov. Link

"A former senior official of the conservative Inkatha Freedom Party has revealed startling new evidence directly linking South African security forces with Chief Mangosutho Buthelezi's Zulu-based party.

"Mbongan Khumalo, once an Inkatha central committee member and leader of the Youth Brigade disclosed last week in the *Weekly Mail* newspaper how Inkatha members received training from the South African Defense Forces'(SADF's) military-intelligence wing and embarked on a campaign to discredit progressive organizations...

"According to Khumalo, Inkatha leaders received military training to strengthen the organization against the ANC shortly before the outbreak of ethnic violence in early 1990...

"Shortly after his recruitment into Inkatha, Khumalo became suspicious of 'mysterious clean-cut guys' who came to collect salaries from Inkatha offices in the KwaZulu capital, Ulundi - apparently for doing nothing.

"He later discovered that these were the 200 Inkatha members trained by the SADF in the Caprivi strip in Namibia and in Israel in 1986. In 1989, after passing through further secret camps in Natal, the men were placed in the KwaZulu police force...

"Khumalo said the men were trained in assassination techniques and guerrilla warfare...

"Khumalo has detailed various atrocities committed by the hit men, including an attack on an ANC funeral in the township of Wesselton(about 100 kilometers from the Swaziland border), where gunmen opened fire on mourners and corpses in coffins

awaiting burial.

"SADF support for Inkatha was not limited to leadership and military training. The South African police also produced a propaganda video, for Inkatha's use, which blamed the ANC for the ongoing violence in Natal..."

-from "New Disclusures Link Inkatha And Government Forces," page 13, Jan. 22-28 THE CITY SUN(Brooklyn, N.Y.)

African Traditions Alive But At Risk In Brazil

"Deep in the Amazon rain forest, isolated villages struggle to survive and preserve the African customs of the runaway slaves who founded them two centuries ago.

"Men till the land communally, as their ancestors did. Parents tell their children tales of slavery passed on for generations, and teach them African dances...

"Brazil's 1988 constitution promised that the villages, called quilombos, would be given title to the land they had traditionally worked.

"Mining projects and a newly created national forest have encroached on quilombo land, however, and a consortium led by Alcoa and Shell proposes a new bauxite mining operation...

"Portuguese colonizers began bringing African slaves to Brazil in the 17th century and did not free them until 1888. Resistance among the slaves was endemic and runaways established the quilombos, or free communities, in many parts of the country.

"The most famous quilombo was Palmares, founded about 1630 in the arid northeastern outback. Its residents, who numbered 20,000 at one point, repelled attacks by government forces for more

(Cont. on p. 12)

POETRY/STORY/GRAPHICS

HALLOWEEN ON THE STREETS

The loud noises of children
On any night
Might spell the end
On a lean street, on a mean street
In the city.

It may be Valentine or Halloween,
Either, we think is for candy or kisses,
Not shots and bloody despair
Timed to bronze fear--
As deep in hue as oak leaves,
As yellow as those on birch--
In tears of sorrow.

A lovely night of death it is,
Any night is given to death,
To drive-by looting of limbs, of life.
Young bloods, turned to bones
Are driven to kill, to maim,
To steal the earth's young voices.

Bones pull up to curbs,
Take the aborigine of breath,
First blush of youth,
Scatter it as so many leaves,
Strewn to dance and die.

Bones sit in cars,
Swagger down streets.
Bones dance as by music,
Only they can hear
At a masked ball,
Boyz in the Hood, in red, in blue
Are ghosts entrapped in colors
Bones as inmates,
Bones drunk on beer,
Bones living in ignorance,
Dancing without care
In a land of nightmares
And gluttonous dreams
as fear.

-Ella Robinson

than six decades before a huge assault in 1695 ended their resistance...

"Villagers have pride in the past, and in their roots.

"The ancestors 'set an example for us because, as hard as the whites tried, the slaves were able to remain free', said Pedro Viana da Cruz, 59. 'Today, Blacks face discrimination and we still have to struggle for our liberty'.

"Rafael Viana added: 'We love the African nation because we have African blood.'"

-from "Descendants Of Brazilian Slaves Try To Preserve African Ways," page 7, Jan. 25-31 THE ATLANTA VOICE

REVIEW

Kwanzaa In Rhythm And Rhyme: Two Books By Nelson

Since Maulana Ron Karenga's creation of Kwanzaa in 1966, several books have been written about this culture-based period(Dec. 26-Jan. 1) of celebration by Africans in the U.S. of ourselves and dedication to traditional African principles and values. What is unique about these two books by JohnnieRenee Nia Nelson is that they give information about and explanation of Kwanzaa through rhythm and rhyme. The two volumes, A QUEST FOR KWANZAA and POSITIVE PASSAGE: EVERYDAY KWANZAA POEMS, provide a fun way for African youth(particularly, pre-teens) to learn about Kwanzaa and why it should be important to them.

From A QUEST FOR KWANZAA, there is the poem "How Kwanzaa Came To Be," which makes the point that fruits do not have to be limited to a class of actual foods: *...a sense of pride about our African heritage and roots and a sense of accomplishment for*

(Cont. on p. 15)

BOOKS

If you're serious about wanting to establish for yourself a historical knowledge/understanding base, the below-listed books will get you on the way, big time.

THE AFRICAN ORIGIN OF CIVILIZATION by Cheikh Anta Diop

INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN CIVILIZATION by John G. Jackson

STOLEN LEGACY by George G.M. James

BLACK MAN OF THE NILE AND HIS FAMILY by Yosef ben-Jochannan

BLACK WOMEN OF ANTIQUITY edited by Ivan VanSertima

TWO THOUSAND SEASONS (historical novel/odyssey) by Ayi Kwei Armah

THE DESTRUCTION OF BLACK CIVILIZATION by Chancellor Williams

WHAT THEY NEVER TOLD YOU IN HISTORY CLASS by Indus Khamit Kush

3000 YEARS OF BLACK POETRY edited by Lomax and Abdul.

AFRIKAN PEOPLE AND EUROPEAN HOLIDAYS (Volumes I and II) by Ishakamusa Barashango

THEY CAME BEFORE COLUMBUS by Ivan VanSertima

THE BLACK INDIANS by William Loren Katz

DANGEROUS MEMORIES: INVASIONS AND RESISTANCE SINCE 1492 by Golden, McConnell, Poppen, Mueller, and Turkovich

PERIODICALS

History is not only that which has gone on a year ago, a century ago, or many millenia ago. It is what has gone on yesterday and what goes on today. It is crucial that we know what is going on around us so that we aren't caught off-guard by a moving history that does not stop to accommodate our ignorance of affairs. We recommend the following publications as sources by which we can keep abreast of current events and developments.

MOBETTER NEWS(P.O. Box 1447; So. Holland, IL; 60473). This is a quarterly newspaper which explores the ideas of African men and women on a variety of matters of concern: Africentricity in education, literary developments, male/female relationships, etc.

THE MILWAUKEE COURIER(2431 W. Hopkins Blvd.; Milwaukee, WI.; 53206) A weekly newspaper that gives primary coverage to developments primarily affecting Milwaukee's African community. It is fairly typical of newspapers of the "black" press except that one of its writers, Matthew Stelly regularly deals with issues affecting African folks throughout the U.S. and, more importantly, does so from a firmly pro-African position and is a hard-hitting, no-punch-pulling journalist.

THE BLACK SCHOLAR(P.O. Box 2869; Oakland, CA.; 94609) A quarterly magazine which features ideas on important issues, reviews of books, poetry on occasion. Generally contains powerful and incisive work.

THE NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS(2340 Frederick Douglass Blvd.; N.Y., N.Y.; 10027).This weekly newspaper is unflinching in its willingness to cover issues of controversy, doesn't limit its coverage to the U.S., and is not hesitant to defend African leaders and spokespersons from attack by the Caucasian press or Caucasian politicians. -More recommended publications next time.

our African-American fruits
jazz, blues, literature, art,
reggae, rap, and spirituals
are all cultural fruits of
our labor...

One of the themes that is prominent in both of these books is that of the oneness of African people everywhere and, related to this, the position of Africa and African traditions as hub of the universal wheel of African populations. The poet expresses a desire for her own assimilation of African culture, as in the poem, "Masai Men," in which she explains that:

"...when they do that leap dance
that they so expertly do
I find myself wishing
that I also knew
How to make my body jump
four stories high
To face a giraffe
Eye to eye..."

(from POSITIVE PASSAGE)

A QUEST FOR KWANZAA and POSITIVE PASSAGE provide excellent opportunities for children and youth and their parents to interact in the process of learning about Kwanzaa and about the history and cultures in which it is rooted. The two volumes are available from: House of Nia
4014 Calmoor St
National City, CA
91950

PERIODICALS

Europeans), acts of betrayal, the use by Europeans of native people as mercenaries against Africans and of Africans as mercenaries against native people, etc.

We have shown tiny glimpses of the story of relations between the indigenous people of this country and Africans

John Horse (or Cohia) joined forces with Wild Cat as his black sub-chief, and together the two men led militant Seminole forces fighting the United States for twenty years.

because we've had more than enough buffalo soldiers in the past and too many in the present.